

Message Text

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TO ALL NATO CAPITALS PRIORITY
INFO USCINCEUR PRIORITY
USNMR SHAPE PRIORITY
USLOSACLT PRIORITY
CINCLANT PRIORITY
USDELMC BRUSSELS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 042103

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO

SUBJECT: NATO LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM

1. NATO TASK FORCE DIRECTORS ARE NOW IN FINAL STAGES OF
PREPARING THEIR FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE TEN FIELDS
OF THE NATO LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM. THEIR REPORTS
WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE EXECUTIVE WORKING GROUP BY
1 MARCH, FOR USE AS A BASIS FOR PREPARATION OF AN INITIAL
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NATO LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM FOR APPROVAL AT THE SPRING
DPC MINISTERIAL AND THEN SUMMIT, WITH THE REPORT ON
THEATER NUCLEAR FORCES BEING HANDLED THROUGH NPG CHANNELS.

2. WE BELIEVE THAT MOST TASK FORCE REPORTS WILL FURNISH
AN AMPLE BASIS FOR DRAWING UP A LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM
PROVIDING FOR SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN NATO DEFENSE

OVER THE LONG-TERM ;N SELECTED CRITICAL FIELDS UNDER TIMINGS AND PRIORITIES TO BE ESTABLISHED. THE KEY PROBLEM BEFORE THE EXECUTIVE WORKING GROUP WILL BE THAT OF ASSESSING PRIORITIES IN ADOPTION OF THE ACTION AREAS RECOMMENDED BY TASK FORCE DIRECTORS.

3. THE PROBLEM FACING NATIONS, THOUGH HOPEFULLY MITIGATED BY CONTINUING INFORMAL CONTACT BETWEEN NATIONAL AUTHORITIES AT THE TASK FORCES, WILL BE THAT OF EITHER ADJUSTING NATIONAL PROGRAMS TO NATO RECOMMENDATIONS OR FINDING ADDITIONAL FUNDS WITH WHICH TO SUPPORT THE NEW PROGRAM ACTIONS. ON THIS SCORE WE ARE CONCERNED BY INDICATIONS THAT MANY ALLIES WILL ARGUE THAT THEIR FUNDS ARE ALREADY FULLY COMMITTED FOR NEXT SEVERAL YEARS, LEAVING LITTLE ROOM FOR CHANGES. IF THIS PROVES TO BE THE CASE, OF COURSE, LTDP WILL BE CRIPPLED AT OUTSET.

4. ON THE CONTRARY, THE UNDERLYING LTDP ASSUMPTION, WHICH WE SUPPORT, IS THAT ALLIANCE COOPERATION ON AN AGREED LONG-TERM BASIS IN CERTAIN KEY AREAS SHOULD OFFER BETTER RESULTS THAN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL PROGRAMMING BASED ONLY IN PART ON NATO MEDIUM-TERM FORCE GOALS. IT WILL PERMIT NATO TO ACHIEVE A BETTER DEFENSE THAN CURRENTLY RESULTS FROM THE DISPARATE DEFENSE EFFORTS PRESENTLY MOUNTED. (THE 15 NATIONS ARE ESTIMATED

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TO HAVE SPENT OVER 165 BILLION US DOLLARS IN 1977.)

5. THE UNITED STATES IS PREPARED TO CONSIDER ADJUSTMENT OF ITS LONGER-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAMMING FOR BETTER FIT WITH NATO COALITION DEFENSE, AND HAS ALREADY MADE ADJUSTMENTS IN SOME CASES, BASED ON DISCUSSIONS WITH NATO AUTHORITIES. MOREOVER AND TO THE SAME END, WE LOOK FOR AN EQUAL WILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF OUR ALLIES TO CONSIDER SIMILAR ADJUSTMENTS IN THEIR PROGRAMMING.

6. WE LOOK ON THIS EFFORT AT LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAMMING AS OFFERING A MAJOR OPPORTUNITY FOR NATO NATIONS TO GET A MORE EFFECTIVE DEFENSE OUT OF THEIR CURRENT EFFORTS THROUGH AGREED PROGRAMMING IN CERTAIN KEY AREAS. FOR NATO COLLECTIVELY TO TAKE THIS STEP WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY IMPROVE THE ABILITY OF EACH INDIVIDUAL NATO NATION TO MAINTAIN SUPPORT FOR ITS OWN DEFENSE EFFORT. CERTAINLY IT WOULD HELP THE UNITED STATES TO MAINTAIN ITS EFFORTS IN THE FORWARD DEFENSE OF WESTERN EUROPE IF ITS ALLIES ARE SEEN TO PLACE ALLIANCE DEFENSE AHEAD OF NATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS.

7. POSTS SHOULD DRAW ON THE ABOVE IN ANY DISCUSSIONS
ON THE NATO LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM, WITH THE
OBJECTIVE OF ENSURING HIGH-LEVEL UNDERSTANDING OF
THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS EFFORT AND OF THE NEED FOR
SERIOUS PARTICIPATION BY ALL MEMBERS.

8. PLEASE REPORT RESULTS OF ANY SUCH DISCUSSIONS,
TOGETHER WITH ANY POINTS EMERGING WHICH MIGHT PROVIDE
INSIGHT INTO PARTICULAR NATIONAL INCLINATIONS OR
ATTITUDES. VANCE

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